

would make it possible to produce automobile bodies from wood at less cost than they can now be made, and at the same time produce better bodies, there is good reason to believe that a lot, if not all of the future cars would have bodies of wood. Such use of wood could play an important part in automobile production because the metal released through the production of wood bodies could be used for other parts of automobiles where wood is not usable.

(Editor's Note—Henry Ford is already reported to be testing plastic-wood bodies and test flights are reported of a 4-passenger mahogany plastic plane.)

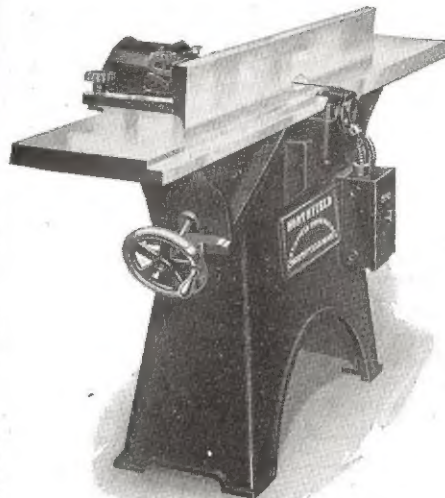
This would seem to be an excellent time to put forth the utmost energy in developing substitutes for metal. It's high time to start designing and building machines and other equipment which will make these substitutes serve as well or better, and cost less, certainly no more, than the same products made of metal. What is done along this line now should prove to be a substantial contribution to our present defense program. What is done from now on will play an even more important part in our country's future.

The world is in a state of flux. A major war started in August 1914. Another got under way in September 1939 only 25 years later. The need for fuel supplies, especially oil resources has been given as one cause for these wars. Research has reached the point, however, where either liquid or solid fuels can be produced from products within any given nation. For a great many things there is no substitute for iron. Any nation without an iron supply must feel helpless at the hands of its enemies. Certainly it cannot feel secure until it is assured of an adequate supply of commercial-grade ore. It is not surprising in the face of these facts

that Germany invaded Norway and insured a steady supply of Swedish iron ore by so doing. Swedish ore yields a higher percentage of pure iron than that from other parts of the world. It yields 60% pure iron against some 45% in the case of our own ore. Germany's own iron deposits are of low grade. An oil supply is of great importance to any modern nation, but it is not so essential as an abundant supply of iron.

It should be obvious that the only way to insure an ample supply in the future is through an intelligent policy of conservation, using other materials wherever iron is not absolutely essential. Theoretically the use of iron does not reduce the supply. It always can be remelted and made over into other forms. The practical problem is to recover the scrap. An increasingly large proportion of it becomes difficult, if not impossible to recover. To the degree that iron and steel in civilian products has to be commandeered for defense purposes, the more difficult it will become to continue civilian activities during a defense emergency. If we reach the point where it becomes necessary to demolish modern buildings in order to recover the steel which went into their construction; to break up perfectly good motor vehicles to recover the metal in them for use in making implements of war, there will be serious difficulties in continuing more and more civilian activities. If we continue to increase the use of iron and steel, however, for purposes for which substitutes will serve as well or better, we are bound, sooner or later, to find our only source of iron and steel is in scrap, and in scrapping products made of iron and steel. Such facts as these call for serious consideration, not only for the welfare of future generations but, perhaps, for the welfare in their old age of children already born.

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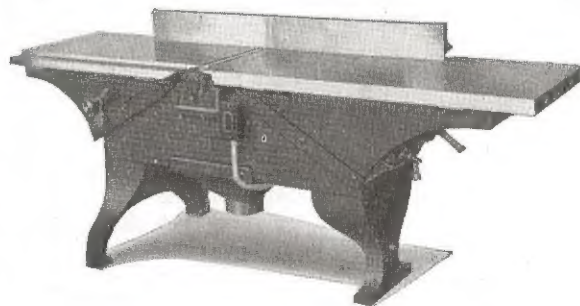


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